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HANDICAPS OF EXPANSION OF PET NITROGEN WORKSNepszava

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The government has appropriated 90 million forints for the expansion of the Pet Nitrogen Works (Peti Nitrogenmuvek) with a view to doubling the fertilizer production of the enterprise. The expansion program has, however, encountered serious difficulties which were summarized by Ferenc Kardos, manager, and Imre Szentmiklosi, chief engineer as follows:

The lignite, which is an important basic material for fertilizer production, is of inferior quality. In 1933, 860 cubic meters of hydrogen gas were produced per ton of lignite mined at Varpalota, while in the current year the hydrogen gas yield has declined to 690 cubic meters per ton of lignite. As a result the production of ammonia, the basic material of Pet salt for which the hydrogen is used, has decreased considerably.

Because of the poor quality of the Varpalota lignite, the annual coal bill of the enterprise has increased by 3 million forints. The cost of materials increased to 61.5 percent for April 1954 as compared with the 58.8 percent called for in the monthly plan.

Another source of trouble is that coking coal from Varpalota is shipped to the Inota power plant, while Pet is receiving only powdered coal for its boilers. Consequently, Pet must buy coke, although it could produce it from coal.

The management has been urging the construction of a cable railway between the nitrogen works and the Varpalota mines. Currently, lignite and coal from Varpalota are received in hundreds of freight cars, but the nitrogen works lacks the necessary equipment and manpower for unloading and transporting these materials within the plant. If the recommendation of the management were accepted by higher authority, the cable railway would make a large number of freight cars available for other purposes and relieve the freight car shortage on the railroads.

Another serious difficulty is due to the fact that the only Hungarian mine which can supply limestone with a 58 percent calcium oxide content is the property of the Szabadbattyán Hog Breeding and Fattening Enterprise (Szabadbattyáni Sertestenyésztő és Hízóló Vállalat). The exploitation of this mine is unsatisfactory, and the limestone which it supplies is full of impurities.

The enterprise also contends with a considerable housing shortage. The equipment of the building enterprises is deficient and labor migration is a constant source of trouble. The management also complained about the extremely long periods of waiting for delivery of equipment and the poor quality of equipment received after the long delays. For example, the Ventilating Works Enterprise (Szellozo Muvek Vállalata, Budapest, Albertfalva, Zentai utca 1) delivered three gas blowers but none of them is in working condition. The rotating parts of two gas blowers are cracked, and the circulation of air in the third is so poor that the gas escapes before it is forced into the main conduit. The Chemical Equipment and Radiator Works (Vegyiparigép és Radiátorgyár, Budapest, X., Gyomroi út 76-78) has supplied a machine unit which failed to pass even the minimum pressure test. In the new acid division, 10 percent of the working time is lost because of the extremely poor quality of the machines.

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